

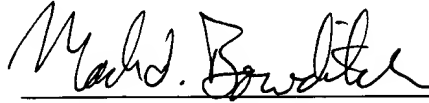
REMARKS

The amendments to claims 26 and 28 are for the purpose of correcting grammatical irregularities pointed out by the Examiner in the Final Office Action. The amendments to claims 1 and 15 to incorporate the range “0-2 v/v% oxygen,” etc., are to specify the range of oxygen conditions intended by the claim term “low oxygen conditions,” as the Examiner appears to be suggesting at page 24 of the Examiner’s Answer. Support for this amendment is found at pages 9 and 11 of the original specification. The amendments to claims 2 and 3, and the amendment of claim 15 to insert the word “subsequently” at the beginning of step (b), are to further emphasize that the recited method steps are performed sequentially, as described for example in the original specification at page 9, lines 15-21 and page 10, line 27 to page 12, line 5. This is to address the concern raised by the Examiner at page 24 of the Examiner’s Answer that “no active steps are defined to separate the two steps.” The amendment of claim 20 to recite dependency from claim 15 rather than claim 1 is to correct an obvious typographical error (claim 20 refers to steps (a) and (b), and while claim 15 recites such steps, claim 1 does not).

These amendments are believed to place the claims in allowance, or in better form for consideration on appeal. No new matter is introduced by these amendments. These amendments had not been previously presented because the specific language and terms therein had not been suggested as a means for overcoming the pending rejections until the Examiner’s Answer dated March 2, 2004. Applicant respectfully requests that these amendments be entered previous to consideration of the pending appeal.

Please note that a Revocation and Substitute Power of Attorney, with a change of correspondence address, has been filed concurrently herewith.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mark I. Bowditch", written over a horizontal line.

Date: May 3, 2004

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